

Remote voting procedures adopted in the UK Parliament

On 8 May 2020, the House of Commons Procedure Committee produced a report titled '*Procedure under coronavirus restrictions: remote voting in divisions*' which sets out the arrangements for remote participation in its proceedings.

Below is an overview of those voting procedures:

- A member in charge of an item of business may, with the leave of the Speaker, designate the business as subject to a remote division.
- When the Speaker has determined that a remote division is necessary on a question on a business item subject to remote division, he shall propose the question.
- Members will have 15 minutes to record their vote via the MemberHub system.
- Following routine checking of the result, the tallied figures are taken to and declared by the Chair.
- The Speaker is given considerable power over the operation of the system, including the power to interrupt and suspend a remote division and to declare a division result null and void and order a re-run if notified of a technical problem.

Technical aspects of the remote voting system

- MemberHub infrastructure was designed and built by the Parliamentary Digital Service to be used by Members to digitally table written and oral questions and propose early day motions.
- Access to the MemberHub system is via single sign on with an email address as an identifier, and is secured by multifactor authentication. All data is encrypted and sent over a secure connection, with results stored in two locations. The National Cyber Security Council has confirmed that it is content with the information security protocols.
- Any attempt to facilitate a non-Member to cast a vote over the remote voting system is likely to constitute contempt of the House, and the reputational risk to any Member suspected of facilitating the access of any other person to the MemberHub system in order to cast a vote in a division is likely to be substantial.
- The system tests in the live environment which have been undertaken indicate that the system is sufficiently reliable to be deployed for the purpose assigned.
- Where a Member facing technical voting difficulties experiences failure of access, the Member will be able to contact the relevant House office which will immediately call the Member and arrange for their vote to be recorded.